

SRI LANKA INCREASES VISA FEES FOR TOURISTS



Travelers have to pay more for their electronic travel authorization to Sri Lanka since December 1, 2022.

This extra expense should be expected if you are traveling to Sri Lanka. Starting December 1, the Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) costs tourists \$50 (€48), up from the recent \$35 (€33.50). **It allows you to stay in the country for up to 180 days and must be applied for online before departure**, provided you have a passport valid for at least six months after the date of arrival and a confirmed return ticket.

It is always possible to apply for a visa on arrival in Sri Lanka: the visa fee for tourists is \$60 (€58) and the authorization is valid for only 30 days. Please note that the transit visa (valid for two days) and the visa for children under 12 remain free of charge. Covid-19 restrictions were lifted in early 2022. Travelers, including travelers without a complete vaccination schedule, are not required to be tested upon arrival in Sri Lanka.

The increase is part of the 2023 budget proposal recently presented by Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickramasinghe. It aims to attract more foreign currency to boost the country's economy, which is heavily dependent on tourism, and above all to calm the political and economic crisis that has shaken the country for several months. At the height of the demonstrations, at the beginning of the summer, the Quai d'Orsay had even advised some nationals against traveling to the country.

Sri Lanka is not the only country in Asia to appeal to tourists' wallets in a post-Covid context. Nepal raised its visa fees for tourists by €5 in October. The Philippines did the same in November with its three-month single-entry visas (\$33 instead of \$27). Bhutan tripled its Sustainable Development Fee in September 2022, from \$65 to \$200 per day (\$250 in high season). In Thailand, a tourist tax of about €8 will be introduced from January 1, 2023 to fund sustainable tourism projects.

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